

Support for museums is equally important. They help to preserve and maintain and explain the nation's history and heritage. They impart knowledge of other cultures as well. They inspire citizens of all ages to learn more about history, art, and science. Few experiences can more vividly excite the imagination of a child about our Nation's history than seeing an actual relic of an event they've read about or been told about. With this legislation, we can do more to enable museums to increase their services, bring more exhibits into more communities, and encourage the use of new technology and variety of media.

Also, to ease the burden of insurance, our bill authorizes increased indemnity for art exhibits that might not otherwise take place because of rising costs.

The House has passed a similar version of the bill by an overwhelming majority, and I hope the Senate will do the same. I particularly commend the leadership Senator GREGG, the Chairman of our HELP Committee, and the principal sponsor of this bipartisan legislation. I also commend Senator REED, the principal cosponsor of the bill, who has so effectively carried on the commitment on this issue by his predecessor from Rhode Island, Senator Claiborne Pell. Our committee unanimously approved this bill, and I urge my colleagues in the Senate to approve it now.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to strongly support passage of the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003.

I thank the Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Senator GREGG, and the Ranking Member, Senator KENNEDY, for working closely with me on this bill and for getting us to this point. This has been a long time in coming, and I am glad that we have worked out a bill with the other body that we can be proud to support. Indeed, the bill before us today is essentially the bill we approved in Committee on June 26th.

Last year, during the hearing I chaired on the Museum and Library Services Act, we heard directly from the museum and library communities about the recommendations for updating this law so it meets the future needs of museum and library users. I also extend my thanks to the museum and library communities for their efforts in this process.

Like S. 238, the legislation I introduced earlier this year, and S. 888, which I joined Senator GREGG in introducing, this bill doubles the minimum state allotment under the Library Services and Technology Act, which will enable smaller States like Rhode Island to benefit and implement the valuable services and programs that larger States have been able to put in place.

It also ensures that library activities are coordinated with the school library program I authored, which is now part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The bill includes an increase in the indemnity limits under the Arts and

Artifacts Indemnity Act to ensure continued support for American museums as they facilitate international cultural exchanges through touring exhibitions here in the U.S. and loans of American art around the world.

The bill also establishes a reservation of 1.75 percent of funds for museum services for Native Americans, to match the reservation currently provided for library services under the Library Services and Technology subtitle.

The bill updates the uses of funds for library and museum programs and increases the authorization levels for the Library Services and Technology Act and the Museum Services Act.

We should meet these funding levels in the appropriations process due to this bill's strong bipartisan support. I personally believe that our libraries and museums should be more robustly funded, particularly as these institutions play increasingly important roles in our lives.

Again, I congratulate and thank my colleagues, in particular, Senators GREGG, KENNEDY, FRIST, and ENZI, on passage of this important legislation. I look forward to working with them to get this bill to the President's desk in September so that the bill's increase in the minimum state allotment will take effect in Fiscal Year 2004, as well as on ensuring increased funding for our Nation's libraries and museums.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a Gregg substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill be read a third time; that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 13, and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that all after the enacting clause be stricken, and the text of S. 888, as amended, be inserted in lieu thereof; that the bill be read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that S. 888 be returned to the calendar, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1541) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (H.R. 13), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 2799 AND H.R. 2861

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I understand that the following appropriations bills are at the desk: H.R. 2799 and H.R. 2861. I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bills by their titles.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A bill (H.R. 2799) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies.

A bill (H.R. 2861) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I now ask for their second reading and object to further proceedings on these matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bills will receive their second reading on the next legislative day.

Mr. WARNER. The bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day; is that my understanding from the Chair?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

#### APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Mr. WARNER. Now, in the category of appointment authority, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the Senate's President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR AND NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider en bloc the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar Nos. 344, 345, 346, 353, and 355.

Further, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee and the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations from their respective committees: from the Foreign Relations Committee, PN764, Jeffrey Marcus; from the Finance Committee, PN477, Teresa Ressel.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be considered and confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, on behalf of the Democratic leader, we are also clear on Calendar No. 308, Jack